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COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS

Improvement of the international response to environmental emergencies: draft decision submitted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Note by the Executive Director

The Executive Director has the honour to transmit to the Governing Council the attached draft decision relating to improvement of the international response to environmental emergencies. The draft decision was formulated by the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its forty-ninth meeting, held on 22 March 1995 with a view to facilitating consideration of the subject by the Governing Council.

* UNEP/GC.18/1.

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Annex

DRAFT DECISION SUBMITTED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES

Improvement of the international response to environmental emergencies

The Governing Council,

Recalling its decision 16/9 of 31 May 1991, in which the Council established, on an experimental basis, the United Nations Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance to assess and respond to man-made environmental emergencies, acting in cooperation and in coordination with other United Nations agencies,

Recalling also its decision 17/26 of 21 May 1993, in which the Council decided to extend the experimental stage of the Centre for a further twelve months, during which the Centre should restructure its activities to focus its capacities to address the mandate set out in paragraphs 4 (a) to 4 (d) of that decision,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on improvement of the international response to environmental emergencies (UNEP/GC.18/2),

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs in successfully negotiating institutional and administrative arrangements for the establishment of a Joint United Nations Environment Programme/Department of Humanitarian Affairs Environment Unit in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to enhance international capacity to respond to environmental emergencies,

Also noting the decision taken by the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its forty-fifth meeting, held on 8 June 1994, to accept the Executive Director's proposal for the Joint Unit and to request the Executive Director to implement her proposals for twelve months and refer the question back to the Council at its eighteenth session,

Noting further the establishment of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies which will, inter alia, review the work of the Joint Unit and advise the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator,

Recognizing that more time is required for the Joint Unit to develop its activities and services in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies,

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on improvement of the international response to environmental emergencies;

2. Welcomes the establishment of the Joint United Nations Environment Programme/Department of Humanitarian Affairs Environment Unit;

3. Invites Governments and relevant United Nations agencies, bodies and programmes to cooperate with the Joint Unit in its efforts to provide assistance to countries, in particular developing countries, facing environmental emergencies;

4. Requests the Executive Director to allocate the necessary resources for the biennium 1996-1997 for the administration and operation of the Joint Unit with strict regard to economy;

5. Urges Governments in a position to do so to provide additional resources for the operation of the Joint Unit;

6. Requests the Executive Director to prepare a detailed progress report on the activities of the Joint Unit for an in-depth review of its activities, its resources and structure, including the involvement and contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme, and the appropriateness of the Joint Unit's location, by Governing Council at its nineteenth session.